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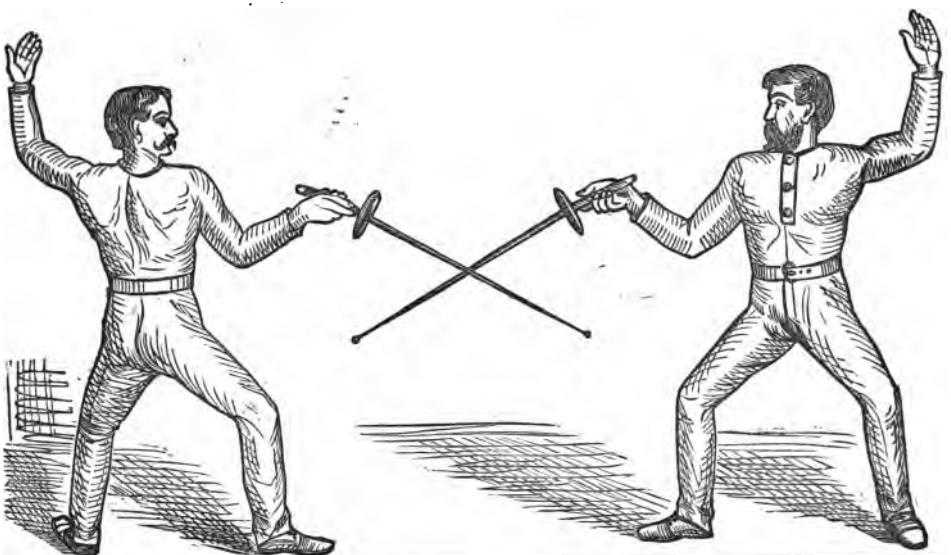

THE GUARD OF HALF CIRCLE. (SEE PAGE 80).

THE

MODERN FENCER:

WITH

THE MOST RECENT MEANS OF ATTACK AND DEFENCE WHEN ENGAGED WITH AN ADVERSARY.

By T. GRIFFITHS,

PROFESSOR OF FENCING, GYMNASTICS, &c.,

AND FIGURES SHOWING THE VARIOUS POSITIONS OF THE BODY.

LONDON:

FREDERICK WARNE AND CO.,

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PREFACE.

Fencing, though considered a gentlemanly accomplishment, does not receive the attention it deserves as an art; chiefly owing to the difficulty of learning, or the disadvantage of not having a master at hand to teach it, more especially in provincial towns and schools. With a view of overcoming some of these difficulties, the author of this little treatise (having had twenty years experience as an instructor of fencing, &c.,) hopes he may not be considered presumptuous in submitting to the public some of the principal positions of the body, with foil in hand,—the object of which is self instruction, on a new system—by plates. By reducing the art to simple movements, we avoid all the complications which fencing usually embraces for the skilful fencer. By the practice of this noble art, we bring all the muscles of the body into action; it gives quickness to the eye, lightness to the hand, firmness to the foot, and increases and confirms health—that most desirable of all blessings. A sufficient knowledge of the foil may

be gained from these plates to enable two persons to practice together, by studying the book carefully for a short time before beginning. More elaborate works have been written on fencing, therefore it is not necessary to enter here into a long detailed account of all the various movements, as that would only tend to perplex the mind. The author's aim has been to convey a practical knowledge of fencing in the simplest manner possible, and in the shortest time.

London, 1867.

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INTRODUCTORY.

The author would impress upon beginners the necessity of strictly attending to the instructions laid down in the first seven positions, as it is only by so doing that they will arrive at a true knowledge of all the other guards and parries. Most people are apt to read a book through too quickly; thus by the time they get to the end they forget the beginning. But whoever wishes to gain a knowledge of Fencing must study one movement before he begins another; by this means he only can accustom himself to the various Thrusts and Guards. The fundamental principle of Fencing consists in the execution of the right arm, the longe, the recovery, advancing, and retreating quickly; and lastly, not least, a good opposition; which is one of the most essential things in Fencing, as you are guarded at least on one side. This will also give you the advantage of knowing what your adversary intends doing, which you must endeavour to discover by the feel of his foil.

FIRST POSITION OF THE BODY.

PLATE I.

FIRST POSITION OF THE BODY.

PLATE No. 1.

Place the right heel against the left ancle, so as to form a right angle with both heels, the foil to be held in the left hand under the hilt with the thumb and fingers, the right hand straight on the outside of the right thigh, shoulders square and pressed rather backwards, eyes turned towards the adversary, shewing the right breast to the front, without constraint.

THIRD POSITION.

PLATE III.

THIRD POSITION.

PLATE No. 3.

Raise both hands above the head, holding the button of the foil with the thumb and first finger of the left hand, turn your eyes to the right, so as to see your opponent full in the face.

MANNER OF HOLDING THE FOIL IN HAND.

Let the concave of the handle rest in the palm of the hand, the thumb stretched along the convex, the first finger about half an inch in advance of the thumb; the foil should only be held firm in the hand when parrying or thrusting, otherwise the fingers and thumb will get stiff from grasping it too long.

ON GUARD IN CARTE.

PLATE IV.

ON GUARD IN CARTE.

PLATE No. 4.

Bend both knees together until they are in a perpendicular line with the toes; step out with the right foot in a direct line from the left ancle, about 22 inches or more, according to the length of the legs; keep the left arm up and bent, so as to form a half circle, as high as the head, palm of the hand turned towards the left face; keep the body upright, the weight to be kept equally on both legs; bring the point of the foil down to the height of your adversary's left eye; this is the engage of carte; arm bent and the elbow drawn inwards, the hand as high as the centre of the chest.

THE HALF LONGE.

PLATE V.

THE HALF LONGE.

1. Straighten the right arm without moving the body, point of the foil as high as the chest of an opponent, hand as high as your face.

2. Throw the left hand backwards, at the same time press the shoulder well back, palm of the left hand to the front, about four inches from the thigh.

3. Straighten the left knee and incline the weight of the body forward on the right, without moving the foot from the ground.

TO RECOVER.

1. Bend the left knee.

2. Throw the left arm upwards to the position of the guard, bear the weight of the body again equally on both knees, right arm bent, elbow turned inwards; stand firm on guard without appearing stiff; head held easy and upright.

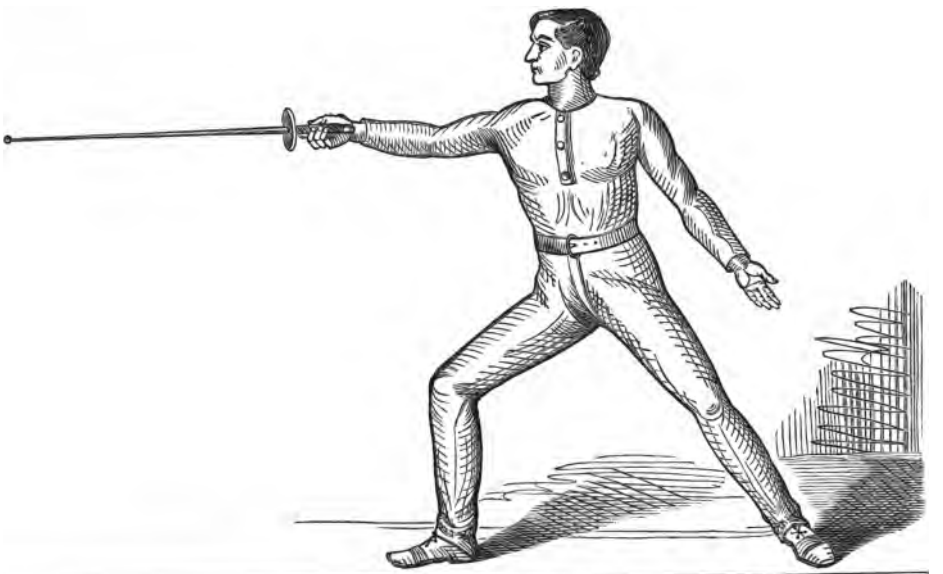


PLATE VI. THE LONGE.

THE LONGE.

PLATE No. 6.

1. Extend the right arm, direct the point of your foil to the height of your chest, longe in carte looking over the right arm, the hand as high as your face.

2. Throw the left hand backwards to within four inches of the left thigh, palm of the hand to the front; press the shoulders well back.

3. Straighten the left knee and keep he foot flat on the ground.

4. Longe forward in a direct line from the left ancle, about forty inches or more, according to the length of the limbs, until the right knee is in a vertical line with the instep, toes turned out.

These four motions should be repeated often, so as to give freedom of action to all the joints.

THE ASSEMBLE OR FINISH.

PLATE VII.

HOW TO RECOVER GUARD.

PLATE No. 7.

1. Bend the left knee back.

2. Throw the left hand upwards to the position of the guard, palm of the hand turned inwards towards the left face, arm bent.

3. Bring the right foot up to the guard, supporting the weight of the body equally on both knees.

4. Bend the right arm, nails upwards, point opposite the face, hand as high as the chest, elbow rather inwards, head kept up. The ground work of fencing depends on the attention given to all those preceding movements of the body.

THE ASSEMBLE OR FINISH.

This is done by beating twice with the flat of the right foot on the ground, with-

out moving the body; secondly, bring the left foot up to the right heel; thirdly, bring the right hand under the chin, dropping the left hand to the side at the same time; fourthly, straighten the right arm to the right side as low as the knees, knuckles downwards.

HOW TO ADVANCE.

Being on guard, take one step forward with the right foot, about 12 inches, bring up the left foot directly, keeping the same distance between both feet, as if making one movement with both; the knees equally bent, the body held upright, eyes fixed on the opponent or object in front.

HOW TO RETIRE.

Take one pace back with the left foot, bringing the right foot up immediately, at the same time beat once with the flat of the right foot firm on the ground. The distance in walking backwards should be longer than the advancing by two or three inches, taking care that the weight of the body is kept equally on both feet, the left breast should be turned slightly towards the adversary. Having practised these movements frequently, finish by beating twice with the right foot, bringing up the left foot, and right hand under the chin, lastly straightening the right arm on the right side.

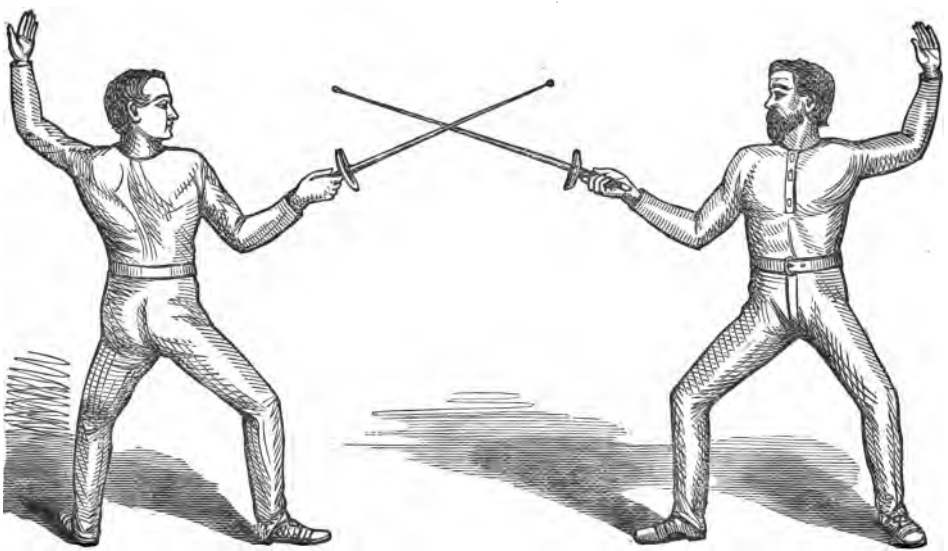


PLATE VIII. THE ENGAGE OF CARTE.

THE ENGAGE OF CARTE.

PLATE No. 8.

INSIDE GUARD HIGH.

Being engaged in carte with an adversary, turn the nails upwards, cross foils about nine inches from the button; this half of the foil is called the foible, from being the next part to the end, the other half is termed the forte or part next the hilt; oppose the opponent's foil sufficiently to prevent him from touching you in the engage, keep the right arm bent inwards, point of your foil opposite your adversary's face, right arm as high as your chest.

THE STRAIGHT THRUST.—If your opponent does not cover himself in the engage, straighten your arm, lower the point to his chest, longe in carte, looking over the right arm, hand as high as the face, recover, and engage in carte, crossing foils as before.

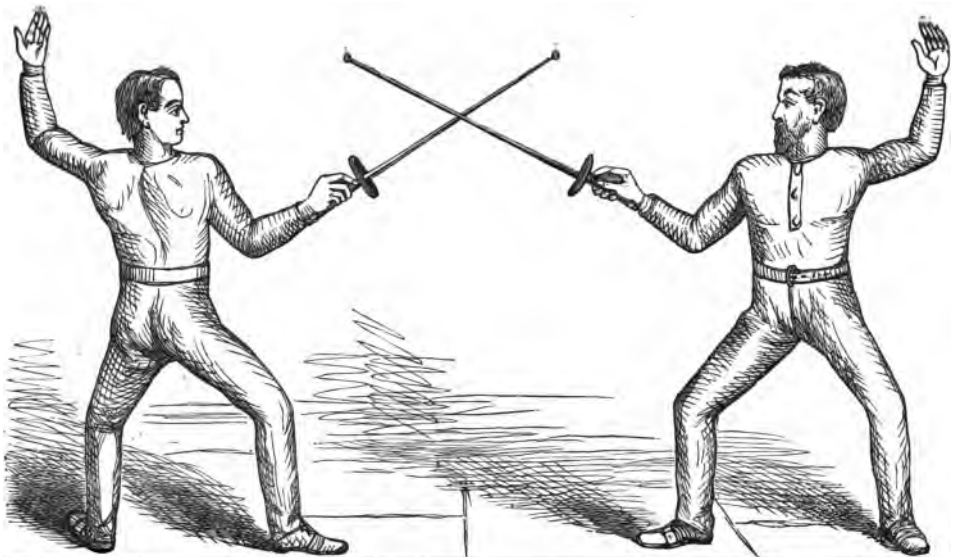


PLATE IX, THE ENGAGE OF TIERCE.

THE ENGAGE OF TIERCE.

PLATE No. 9.

OUTSIDE GUARD HIGH.

This being the opposite guard to carte, it only differs from it in the position of the hand, nails of which are turned downwards, engaged in tierce, join foils as in carte, if your adversary is not well covered in the engage, straighten your right arm by lowering the point to his chest, longe in tierce, looking inside the arm, shoulders pressed well back, left foot firm on the ground, left knee straight, the body not thrown forward but rather upright, recover in tierce.

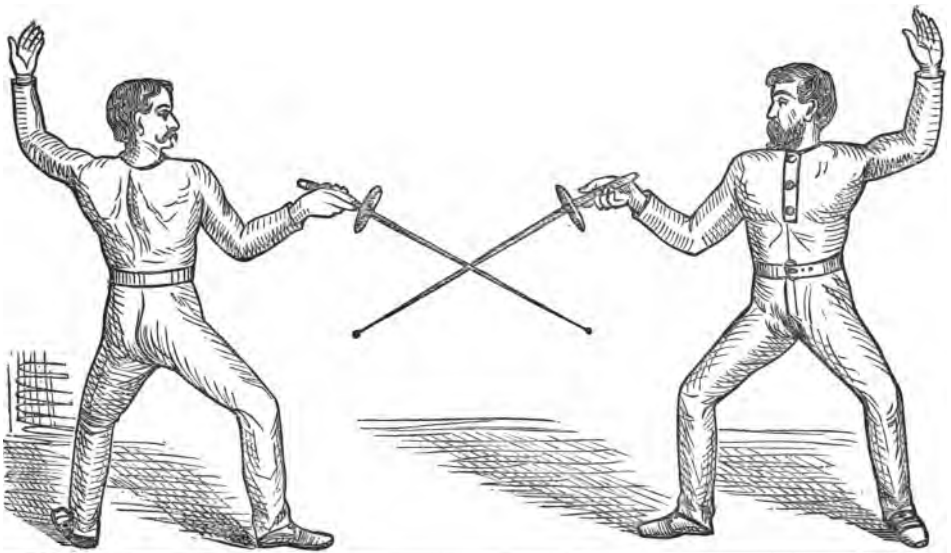


PLATE X. THE GUARD OF HALF CIRCLE.

THE GUARD OF HALF CIRCLE.

PLATE No. 10.

INSIDE GUARD LOW.

The half circle guard is generally used against the thrust of second and low carte. The guard is generally taken in the following manner: raise the hand as high as the left shoulder, nails upwards, the elbow turned well in towards the body, the foil to be held firm in hand, and opposed to your adversary, the point as low as your opponent's waist. If an opening should occur, raise the point and return carte.

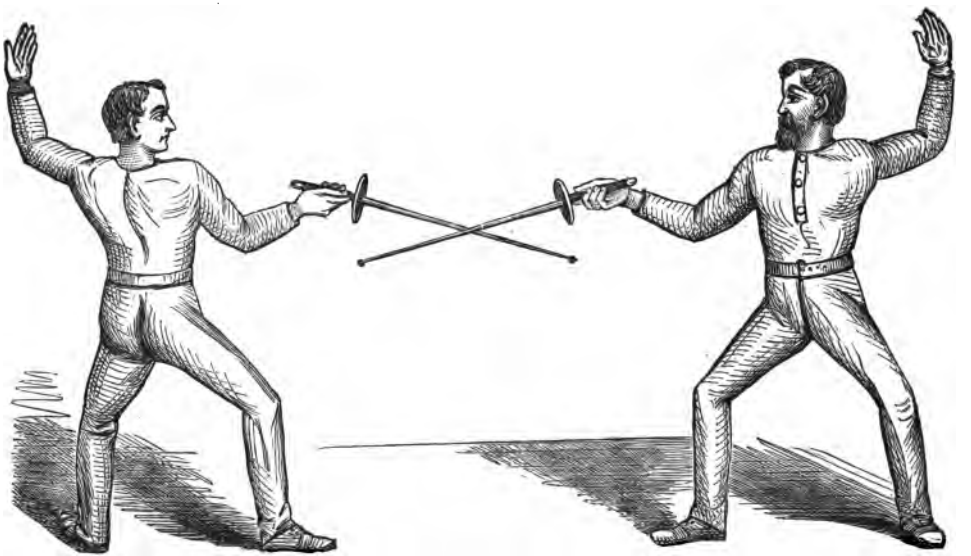


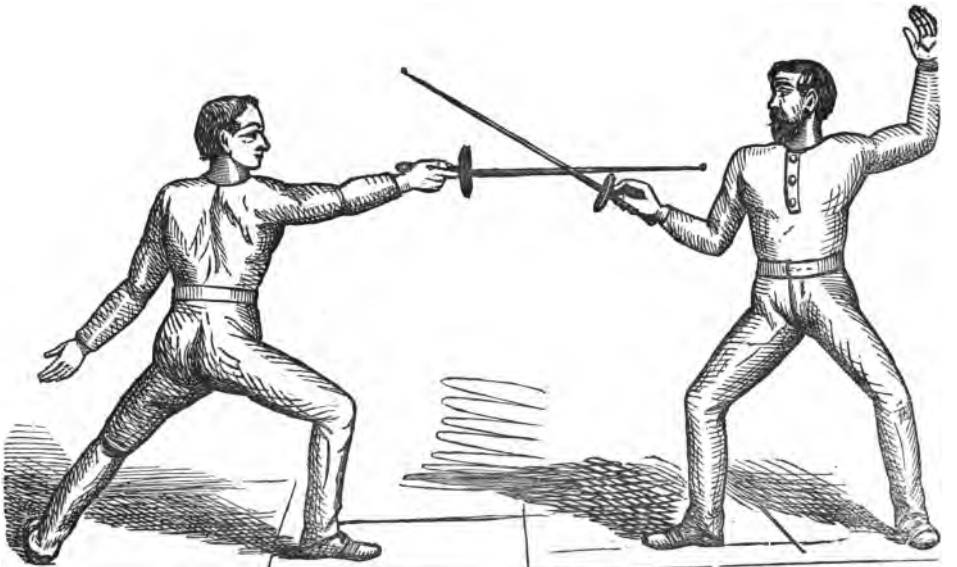
PLATE XI. THE GUARD OF OCTAVE.

THE GUARD OF OCTAVE.

PLATE No. 11.

OUTSIDE GUARD LOW.

The guard of octave is the opposite guard to the half circle, and is used against the thrust of octave, it also prevents the adversary from counter disengaging. Raise the hand as high as your chest, keep the point as high as the lower part of the opponents chest. This is a very useful parry in returning the thrust of low carte.



THE DISENGAGE FROM CARTE.

THE GUARD OF TIERCE.

PLATE XII.

THE DISENGAGE FROM CARTE.

PLATE No. 12.

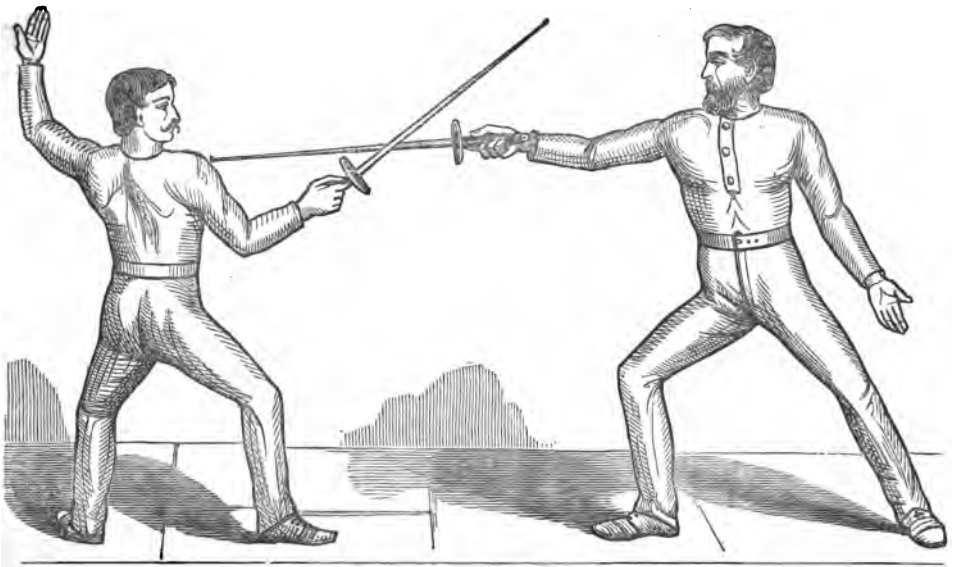
If your adversary presses your foil, lower your point to within about two or three inches of his hilt, at the same time passing it to tierce, straighten the right arm and longe, recover in carte.

THE FEINT OF ONE, TWO.

Being engaged in carte, if your opponent takes the guard of tierce when you disengage on him, return back to carte and longe, making the movement quickly from the fingers, not from the shoulder, right arm quite straight, nails upwards, look over the right arm, recover in carte.

THE FEINT OF ONE, TWO, THREE.

Engaged in carte, as before, disengage to tierce, again in carte. In both cases raise the point of your foil as high as your opponent's face, arm kept straight, return again to tierce, point to the chest of your adversary and longe in tierce, looking inside your arm, shoulders pressed well back, body upright, recover in carte.



THE GUARD OF CARTE. THE DISENGAGE FROM TIERCE.

PLATE XIII.

THE DISENGAGE FROM TIERCE.

PLATE No. 13.

Engaged in tierce. As soon as your opponent presses your foil, lower your point, straightening the arm, at the same time pass your foil to carte, longe with the knuckles turned upwards, taking care that the left foot does not quit the ground; recover in tierce.

THE FEINT OF ONE, TWO.

Engage in tierce. Disengage to carte, pointing to the face of your adversary, arm straight, the body kept steady; the moment your opponent takes the simple guard of carte, return to tierce, longe, looking inside the right arm; recover in tierce.

THE FEINT OF ONE, TWO, THREE.

Being engaged in tierce. Disengage to carte, again to tierce, extending the arm in the first disengage, finding that he takes the simple guards each time, return to carte, longe, looking over the arm, left knee always being kept straight in the longe; recover in carte.

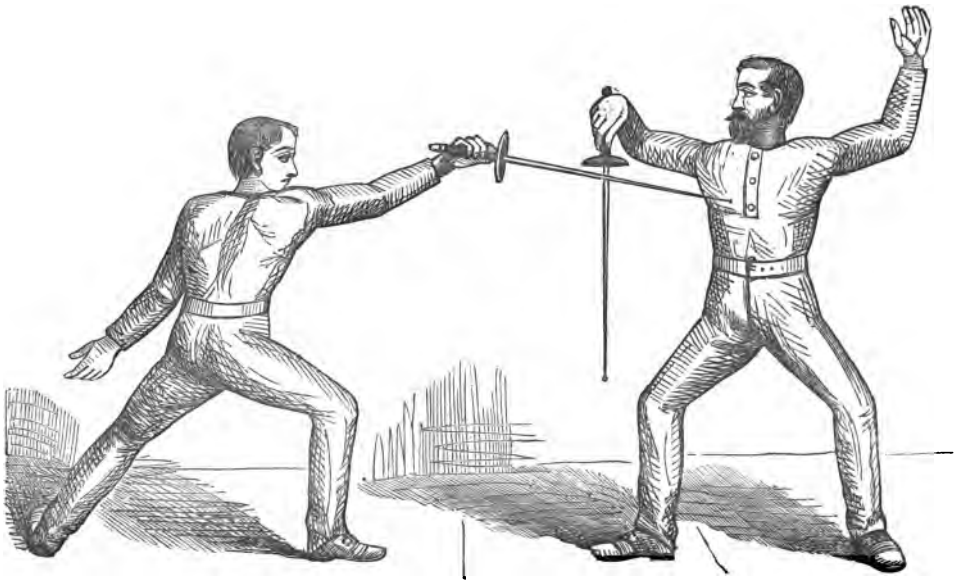
WRIST PRACTICE.

An excellent practice for the wrist is two persons to practice the counters of carte and tierce. This is done in the following manner: being engaged in carte, your adversary disengages on you, take the counter of carte, and disengage on him without touching, unless by mutual agreement, he taking the counter on your disengage; keep repeating this for some time; then engage in tierce, the opponent disengages, take the counter of tierce, disengage on him; continue this also for some time and change again to counter carte. These practices will soon make the wrist supple and strong—two essential things for fencing.

HOW TO THRUST AT ALL FEINTS.

To thrust to all feints is to put all the thrusts of fencing into practice; for this

purpose, begin by endeavouring to confuse your adversary by beating with the foot on the ground, disengaging without longeing, extending the arm; by this means you will discover what parries he intends taking and what thrust you can make safely.



THE THRUST OF SECONDE. THE PARADE OF PRIME.

PLATE XIV.

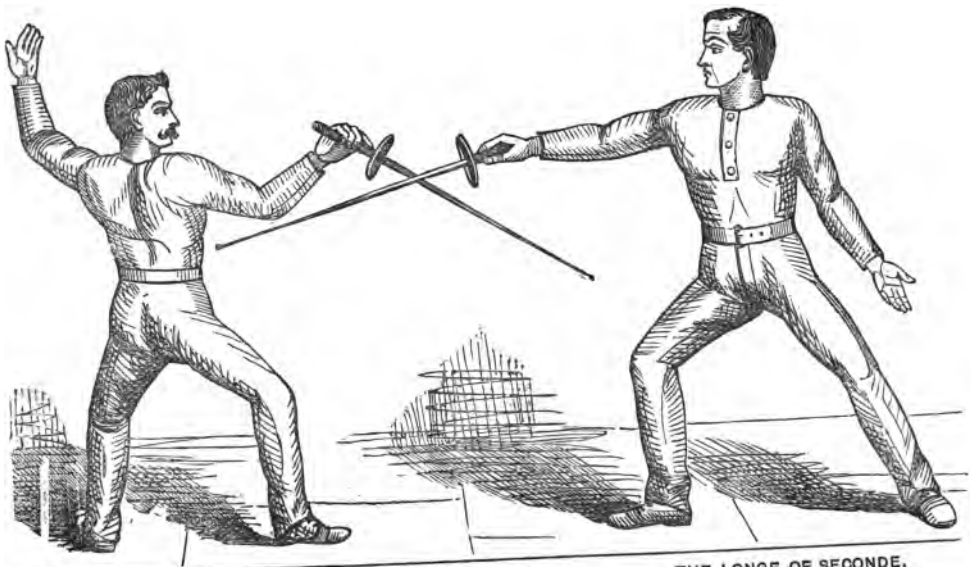
THE PARADE OF PRIME.

PLATE No. 14.

Being engaged in tierce, your adversary tries to get in by main force; bend your arm and wrist, turning the nails downwards at the same time, raise the hand as high as your chin, drawing the arm inwards as you raise the hand, the point of your foil directed towards the lower part of the chest of your adversary, parry and longe in seconde, recover quickly in tierce.

THRUST OF SIXTE.

After having parried prime. Should your opponent keep his hand low in trying to get in by force in tierce, turn the knuckles upwards quickly, bring the point over his arm, thrust sixte over the arm by binding his foible with your forte; this must be done by a quick turn of the wrist.



THE PARADE OF SECONDE.

THE LONGE OF SECONDE.

PLATE XV.

THE PARADE OF SECONDE.

PLATE No. 15.

Engaged in tierce, if your adversary should drop his point, parry seconde by giving a dry beat on the foible of his foil with the forte of yours, nails downwards, hand opposed, so as to prevent him touching you in the longe, point to the lower part of his waist, hold the head well up, the body not to be thrown too much forward otherwise you cannot recover quickly, recover in sixte.

THE FEINT OF SECONDE.

Being engaged in tierce, drop your point under the hilt of your opponent, principally with the fingers, nails downwards, but without lowering the hand, return directly back again, longe by turning the nails upwards in sixte, over the arm, or return back to seconde again, longe, and recover in tierce. This is called the feint of seconde and tierce.

THE PARADE OF QUINTE.

PLATE XVI.

THE PARADE OF QUINTE.

PLATE No. 16.

This Parade is used in the same side as carte inside guard, and taken in the following manner—the hand as high as the breast, nails turned downwards, parry and longe in seconde or carte over the arm; the parry is mostly taken when the adversary thrusts low.

It is also a very quick return thrust, when your adversary keeps his hand too low, or drops the point to feint for the lower part of your body.

THE PARADE OF SIXTE.

PLATE XVII.

THE PARADE OF SIXTE.

PLATE No. 17.

This parade only differs from tierce in the nails being turned upwards instead of downwards. The hand must be kept as high as the shoulder, point as high as your adversary's face, if your opponent is not well covered, straighten the arm, longe with the nails upwards, recover, if he presses, disengage in carte; the feint of one, two, and one, two, three, is generally made from this position.

BINDING THE FOIL FROM SIXTE.

Engage in sixte; if your opponent endeavours to get in under your wrist, drop your point opposite his waist, binding his foible with your forte, longe in octave, recover in tierce or sixte.

THE PARADE OF COUNTER CARTE.

PLATE XVIII.

THE PARADE OF COUNTER CARTE.

PLATE No. 18.

Having joined foils in carte, nails upwards, as soon as your adversary disengages, follow his foil by making a small circle until you meet it again in carte; if he disengages a second time, take the simple guard of tierce. This is one of the best and safest parries in fencing, as it stops most of the feints. Being engaged in tierce, if the opponent feints one, two, take the counter of carte in the same manner as before, should he disengage a third time, take the guard of tierce, if he lowers the point, take the half circle, returning again to carte.

HOW TO PARRY CARTE.

When your adversary stretches his arm to thrust, give a beat on the foible of his foil with the forte of yours, so as to make an opening for your thrust. This may be also done in the counter of carte, when your opponent is not too close.

THE PARADE OF COUNTER TIERCE.

PLATE XIX.

THE PARADE OF COUNTER TIERCE.

PLATE No. 19.

This parade is performed similar to the counter of carte, but the nails must be downwards. Being engaged in tierce, if your adversary disengages, follow his foil in a circular manner until you meet it again in tierce, if he disengages a second time, take the simple guard of carte. Should he make the feint of one, two, without stopping, take the counter of tierce, as before, but be careful not to be too near, as the guard is only safely taken when out of distance. If he disengages after having feinted one, two, take the simple guard of carte.

HOW TO PARRY TIERCE.

Turn the nails downwards, keeping the foil firm in hand, to prevent being disarmed. When your opponent stretches his arm to thrust, give a dry beat on the foible of his foil with your forte, so as to throw it out of the line. Direct your point to his chest, longe either in tierce or seconde.

THE COUNTER OF HALF CIRCLE.

PLATE XX.

HALF CIRCLE PARADE.

PLATE No. 20.

The half circle is generally used after having parried tierce against the thrust of seconde or low carte. For this purpose raise the hand as high as the shoulder, bend the arm, nails turned well upwards, elbow drawn inwards, parry and point rather low, longe in carte.

THE COUNTER OF HALF CIRCLE.

Having crossed foils in half circle, which is only done in making an assault, your opponent passes his foil over yours, follow by making a circle till you meet him again in half circle, if he disengages again, take the guard of octave or seconde, longe and recover in tierce.

Sometimes the circle may be made twice with success by keeping the hand well up, holding the foil firmly.

THE COUNTER OF OCTAVE.

PLATE XXI. .

THE PARADE OF OCTAVE.

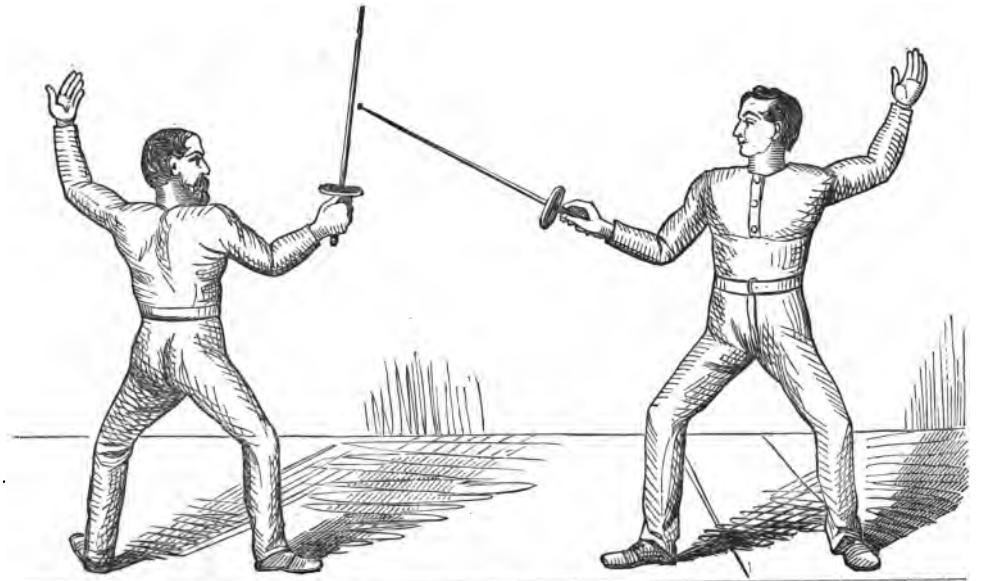
PLATE No. 21.

The octave parade is the opposite guard to half circle, and is taken to prevent the opponent from getting in by force in the lower part of the body in octave or seconde.

Keep the hand as high as the centre of your body, straighten the arm slightly so as to oppose your adversary, point of the foil rather low, parry and longe in tierce or octave.

THE COUNTER OF OCTAVE.

Having opposed your adversary in octave, he may disengage over your foil, therefore follow his foil, immediately describing a circle until you meet his foil again in octave, taking care to keep the hand well up. If he passes over a second time, take the guard of half circle or quinte, longe in low carte, keeping the head up.



THE CUT OVER THE POINT FROM CARTE TO TIERCE.

PLATE XXII.

THE CUT OVER THE POINT FROM CARTE TO TIERCE.

PLATE No. 22.

Engage in carte. If the opponent holds his hand low with the point high, raise your wrist sufficiently to clear the foil of your adversary, without exposing your body. Cut with the foil over his point until it hits the centre of his chest. If your adversary parries tierce, as soon as you see him take the guard, disengage under his arm by passing your point under the wrist. Longe in carte. The cut and longe should be made simultaneously.

THE CUT FROM TIERCE TO CARTE.

This cut is made in the same manner as carte, but the longe must be in carte inside the arm; be careful that the body is well covered, and not run the risk of being hit at the same time; keep the body a little backwards. If the adversary takes the guard of carte when you cut, disengage to tierce by passing your foil quickly over his wrist, arm quite straight, longe in tierce.

ON THE DISENGAGES.

The disengages are made when an adversary takes the simple guards, or leaves himself uncovered on either side, however, care must be taken that he does not thrust at the same time as you disengage, thereby both hitting at the same time. This can be avoided by keeping the hand opposed to the adversary, either in carte or tierce, whichever you may be engaged in at the time of making the disengage, the one, two, or one, two, three.

The disengage is also advantageously taken when the adversary advances or retreats. Allow him to take one pace backwards, opposing his foil on either side; lower the point of your foil; longe, covering your body in carte or tierce, whichever you may be engaged in at the time. Should your opponent advance,

retreat one pace, keeping a good opposition; disengage as before, longe, and recover quickly on guard. The feint of one, two, and one, two, three, can be made in the same manner.

THE SALUTE.

PLATE No. 23.

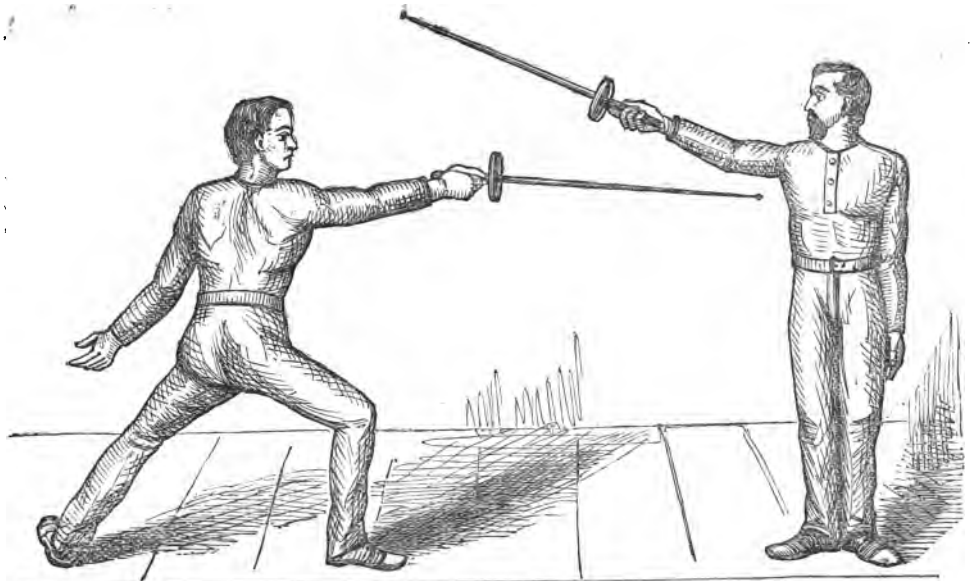
The salute, previous to making an assault or loose play, as it is termed, is an established form of politeness before fencing for hits, it is also an excellent practice, as it prepares the body to undergo the more energetic movements in the assault. Begin in this manner:

1st. Stand, as in plate No. 1, with the foil in the left hand. Salute by presenting the right hand to your adversary as high as the chin, palm of the hand upwards.

2ndly. Bring the hand across the body, as in plate No. 2.

3rdly. Raise both hands above the head, see plate No. 3.

4thly. Step out on guard, in tierce, with your foil out of the line of your adversaries body, your opponent doing the same; now both beat twice with the

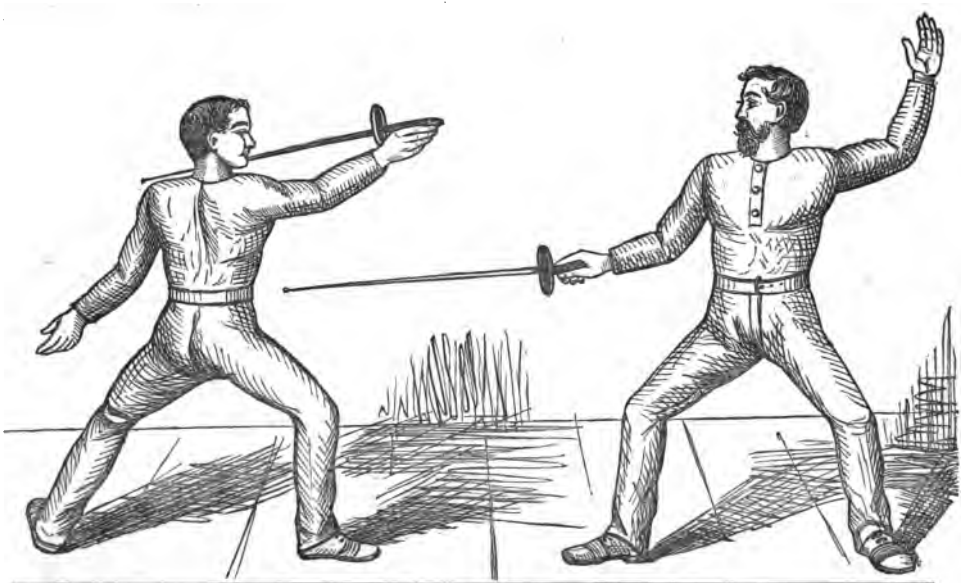


THE SALUTE

PLATE XXIII. No. 1.—MEASURING DISTANCE.

right foot, leaving the body exposed; ask the adversary to thrust first, upon which he brings his point in front of your body and longes in carte, but without touching your body. The distance of his point should be at least one inch from your breast. This is called measuring distance.

Your adversary having recovered, do the same by bringing the right foot up to the left ancle, dropping the left hand, the right hand brought under the chin. See plate No. 7. From this position salute, first in carte by turning the eyes to the left, simultaneously with the foil, bring the foil under the chin again, salute in tierce, bringing the foil back once more, salute your opponent by presenting your point in front of his face, then by a circular movement made inwards with both hands get on guard in carte.



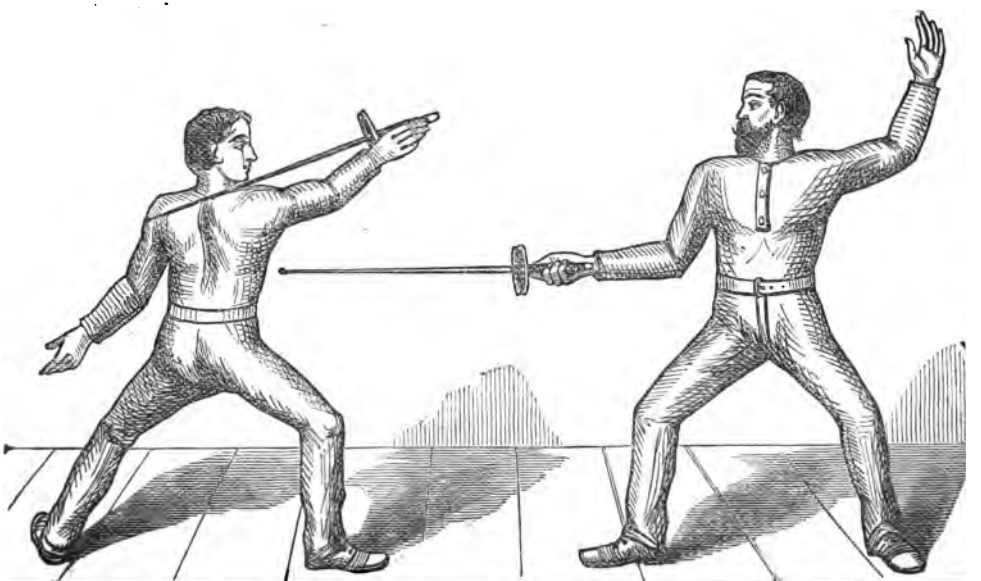
No.1.—THRUSTING CARTE AND TIERCE IN THE SALUTE.

PLATE XXIV.

THRUSTING CARTE AND TIERCE.

PLATE No. 25.

Engaged in carte, being the adversary's turn to thrust first, he disengages in tierce, you parry tierce and turn the hand to seconde, nails down, by dropping the point; your opponent's foil is now over the left shoulder, holding with the fingers and thumb very slightly. Six disengages are to be made, that is to say, three on each side, finishing in carte; when your adversary gets on guard in tierce, engage with the foil, at the same time beating once with the right foot; now he disengages to carte, parry carte and turn your foil in half circle, nails up, his foil is now over the right shoulder. When he gets on guard, engage again in carte, beating once with right foot. When he has completed the six disengages, he finishes by feinting one, two, without longeing, recovers in tierce, leaving his body exposed, bringing the right foot up to the left ancle, left hand down tothe side.



No. 2.—DISENGAGING CARTE AND TIERCE IN THE SALUTE.

PLATE XXV.

No. 2.—DISENGAGING CARTE AND TIERCE.

PLATE No. 25.

Being your own turn to thrust, your opponent asks you to do so; begin by bringing the foil in front of your adversary's body, arm quite straight, longe in carte within one inch of his chest, recover, and both go through the salute, as before; engage in carte. Make three disengages on each side as before, finishing in carte, each beat twice with the right foot, bring the right foot up directly to the left ancle, take one pace backwards with the left foot, resting the pummel of the foil on the right knee, the foil perpendicular, body upright; beat twice again, bring the left foot up to the right heel, right hand under the chin, go through the salute again, finish by describing a circle with both hands,

resting the right hand on the knee, beat twice with the right foot, bring the right foot up to the left ancle, hand under the chin, and drop it to the right side over the knee, left hand down, after which put the mask on.

Beginners should wear the mask while going through the salute, to avoid the possibility of receiving a thrust in the face.

THE TIME THRUST.

The Time Thrust is to be made when your adversary comes upon you, holding his hand rather low, and without being well covered. Make sure that you are covered yourself, stretch the arm, longe quickly; if he forces the foil, disengage. Never take the Time Thrust unless you are pretty certain that you will not get hit at the same time.

THE MEASURE,

WHEN ENGAGED WITH AN ADVERSARY.

The Measure being one of the most difficult things in fencing, it must be determined by the length of the foil and the height of your opponent. Keep out

of distance until you know how far he can longe out; in fencing with a tall man, do not make many movements with the body, keep well on guard, make false attacks, as soon as he answers them longe rapidly, if he parries recover as quickly as possible.

HOW TO PARRY ALL FEINTS.

To parry all feints is to make use of all the various guards and parries learned in the lesson, varying them every moment; by this means your adversary will not be able to discover which of his feints you will answer. The counter parades, with the circle, octave, and seconde, are the best, as they baffle the designs of the adversary.

ANOTHER WAY TO DECEIVE.

Disengage in carte with a straight arm, if the opponent parries with the counter, double disengage; if he parries with the simple, feint one, two; parry sometimes when engaged in carte on the foible of his foil with your forte; changing to tierce, parry tierce; in fact make as many movements as possible to deceive him in

parrying, but never deviating from the opposition on whichever side you are engaged, otherwise you run the risk of being hit while making your feints.

THE ASSAULT.

An Assault with foils resembles an encounter with small-swords. All the thrusts and parries learned in the lesson should be brought into play, the object on both sides being to discover the intentions of his adversary, and conceal his own.

I would impress upon parents and those who have the charge of youth never to allow them to fence together without having a mask on, also a jacket of leather or some strong material to prevent accident; also, to see that the foils are properly buttoned. When you put your-

self on guard, endeavour to discover whether your opponent has a mind to attack or defend; for this purpose, take one step backwards, shewing your point opposite his chest; if he thrusts, parry carte by giving a beat on his foil; if engaged in tierce parry tierce; should he make the feint of one, two, take the the counter of carte, and so on. Try not to let your adversary know your intention by your eye; keep changing to avoid this advantage which you may give him. Never throw the head forward in longeing, by so doing you cannot recover quickly. Always take care to be covered in whatever side you are engaged; if in carte, cover the body to the inside; if in tierce, cover the body outside; observe the same rule in the low guards.

HOW A FOIL IS TO BE MOUNTED.

The length of the blade is 33 to 34 inches from the shoulder to the button. First put the blade in the vice about one inch from the shoulder, bend the flat of the blade slightly towards you, so as to be in line with the concave of the handle. Then put the foil perpendicularly in the vice, about two inches of the bright part to be seen. Make the two shoulders quite square by cleansing them with a file. Next put on a piece of strong leather to make the guard and handle fit more firmly, put on the guard next; now the handle is put on by beating it down with a mallet. Should the handle be too loose put some pieces of thin wood down the sides. The length of the pummel must be taken next; if the end of the foil projecting above the handle

is too long, cut it down to an eighth of an inch, put on the pummel and rivet it on.

HOW TO BUTTON THE FOIL.

The foil is generally buttoned with gutta percha; heat the end of the foil a little, press the gutta percha on the top, and heat the substance until it is warm, then dip your fingers in water and make the button quite round. The best foils are those marked Solingen with a crown stamped on them. Should a foil break, dismount it and remount it in the following manner: file the riveting down to the surface of the pummel, then with a small punch beat out the end of the foil, and mount your foil as before.

NECESSARY APPARATUS FOR FENCING.

To begin lessons, a pupil requires a foil gauntlet and shoes; the shoes ought to be made of buckskin tops, the soles of strong leather. After acquiring some knowledge of fencing, the pupil will require a leather jacket, which should be made of strong brown leather, in case a foil may break while making an assault; also a mask made of strong wire—the French pattern will be found the best, as they are light and yet strong.

THE REPOST OR RETURN THRUST.

The return is given, after having parried successfully, by returning a longe in the most rapid manner possible, taking care that your adversary's foil is out of the line of your body and that you are well covered in whatever line you are engaged in, either high or low.

ON LEFT-HANDED FENCING.

When fencing with a left handed fencer, you must adhere to the same rules as in right hand fencing, only your carte will be his tierce, your tierce his carte. If possible, engage on the outside, so that you may be able to take the counter of carte easier, this being the stronger guard against a left handed fencer; also use the half circle parade against his low thrusts.

THE DOUBLE COUNTERS.

Engaged in carte, disengage to tierce, straightening the arm without longeing. If your adversary takes the guard of counter carte, disengage again, should he take the counter a second time, double, following his foil, longe in tierce; for instance, by doubling counter tierce, you deceive with a circle your opponent's counter carte.

Engaged in tierce, disengage to carte, straightening your arm point to your opponent's chest, but be careful not to expose your body by inclining it forward, this should always be avoided. As soon as he takes the counter of tierce, double, and longe in carte, the same rule is to be observed in the lower guards, that is if you are engaged in half circle, disengage to octave, if your adversary takes the counter of half circle, double and longe

in octave, engage in octave, disengage to half circle; if he takes the counter of octave or seconde, double circle, and longe in half circle or carte:

HOW TO GUARD THE DOUBLE COUNTERS.

After having taken the counter guard twice, not meeting with the foil of your adversary, take the simple guard on the opposite side, for example, being deceived in your double guard of counter carte, take the simple guard of tierce or half circle; being deceived in your double guard of counter tierce, take the simple guard of carte. The same for the low guards, being deceived in your double circle, take the guard of octave, being deceived in your double of octave or seconde, take the guard of half circle or

tierce, always continuing the guard until you meet with the adversary's foil.

Another way of stopping the double movements is to take the guards of counter carte and counter tierce or counter tierce and counter carte without stopping; for the lower part of the body, take the guards of counter circle and counter octave, or counter octave and counter circle. This is an excellent practice to strengthen the wrist and make it supple.

OBSERVATIONS ON FENCING.

1. Never put yourself on guard within reach of your adversary's thrust, more especially at the time of drawing your sword.

2. Be not affected, negligent, nor stiff.

3. Be not angry at receiving a touch, but take care to avoid it.

4. Do not think yourself expert, but hope you may become so.

5. Be not vain of the hits you give, nor show contempt to those you receive.

6. Do not endeavour to give many thrusts on the longe, running the risk of receiving one in the interim, and it is wrong to deliver a second hit on the longe if you are certain you made a hit the first time.

7. When you present the foils to a stranger, give the choice without pressing.

8. If you are much inferior make no long assaults.

9. Do nothing that is useless; every movement should tend to your advantage.

10. Judge of a thrust rather by reason than by its success.

11. Let your play be made as much as possible within the line of your adversary's body.

12. It is not enough that the parts of your body agree, *i.e.*, that you are supple, firm, and vigorous; they must also answer to your adversary's movements.

13. Endeavour to discover your adversary's designs and conceal your own.

14. Two skilful men fencing together act more with their heads than their hands.

15. The smaller you make your feints the quicker will your point arrive at your adversary's body.

16. Do not take the time-thrust too frequently, unless your adversary is much

your inferior, and that you are not likely to be hit at the same time.

17. If one hit the body, and the other the face or elsewhere, at the same time, the hit on the body only is counted.

18. If in binding, parrying, or by any means, your adversary's foil falls, the hit that is made in the interval is good, because you are not obliged to know that he will lose the grasp of it; but if the hit is made after you see the foil is out of his hand you cannot reckon it, but in politeness you should pick up his foil and present it to him.

19. Never attempt to hit your adversary while thrusting carte and tierce in the salute, unless by mutual agreement; and it is a proper civility in saluting, to ask the adversary to thrust first.

20. Be sure, at no time, while fencing with a skilful man to attempt to volte,

disarm, &c.; these are ridiculous things, only taught by the ignorant, and often attended with danger.

21. Never deny a hit.

22. Do not laugh nor ridicule another's manner of taking his lessons.

23. Never make use of the left arm, nor turn your back to avoid being hit on the chest.

24. Always join foils (if possible) after a hit is made, previous to another attack.

N.B.—Never use the Foils without having the Mask on.

A DIALOGUE ON FENCING.

Q. When I parry your thrust over the arm, with the simple parade of tierce, what are you to do to avoid my parade? Ans. I make the feint, une-deux in carte, within the arm.

Q. If I make use of the counter in carte? Ans. I should avoid your counter in carte, by doubling over the arm.

Q. Which parade must I take to prevent your doubling? Ans. You must parry with the counter in carte, miss my blade, and take the parade of tierce, or semi-circle.

Q. If I parry your feint, une-deux, over the arm, with the counter in carte, what should you do to avoid my parade? Ans. I make the feint, une-deux, and take advantage of your round parade, to push double carte over the arm.

Q. When I parry the feint, une-deux, in carte, with the parade of semi-circle, how would you deceive that parade? Ans. I make the feint, une-deux, and as soon as you form the parade of semi-circle, I go over your blade, and thrust low carte.

Q. If I had parried with the circle? Ans. I should pass twice over your blade, and thrust double carte, within the arm.

Q. When you perceive that I am going to parry with the counter in tierce, what thrust are you to make in order to touch me? Ans. I am to double carte, within the arm.

Q. How, if had parried the counter in tierce and carte? Ans. I should have been round once, and made the feint une-deux, over the arm.

Q. When you fence with an adversary who keeps a straight guard, what are you to do? Ans. I am to make several beats with the right foot upon the ground,

if that do not put him in disorder, I am to give him a dry beat upon the foible of his sword, in order to put it aside, then push a straight thrust.

Q. When your adversary disengages and extends his arm to thrust, what are you to fear? Ans. I perceive it is a snare to oblige me to form a parade, so I instantly cross his blade, put it aside, and push seconde.

Q. What do you risk in crossing the blade? Ans. He may take the opportunity to push carte over the arm.

Q. Which parade would you make in that case? Ans. Having missed his sword, I should parry tierce, my return would be, carte over the arm, or seconde.

Q. Which is the best time to attack one's adversary? Ans. When the least motion puts him in disorder, or when he breaks ground.

Q. Do you not fear his retreat is but a snare to take the time? Ans. In closing

on him I make sure of his sword, and know by the feel of it, whether he has a mind to thrust or parry.

Q. When you have to deal with an adversary that does not feel your blade, and puts himself in an open guard, with the point of his sword downwards, what would you do? Ans. Make false attacks, to oblige him to take a proper guard, and only thrust when he answers them,

Q. Which are the best parades in fencing? Ans. The counter parades and circles, because they baffle all the feints.

Q. How can you tell when your adversary will make use of them? Ans. In disengaging either in carte or tierce, or by the feel of his sword.

Q. Which are the best thrusts in fencing? Ans. The straight thrusts pushed with swiftness; they are the only ones we ought to use when within reach, because then the body is less exposed.

Q. What is the best method to acquire swiftness? Ans. To practise thrusting perseveringly tierce and carte, for by that exercise only you gain swiftness, firmness, exactness, &c.

"*Mens sana in corpore sano.*"

EXTRACTS FROM THE PRESS.

"West London Gymnasium.—Mr. T. Griffiths, Professor of Fencing, Gymnastics, and other manly exercises, well deserves to have public attention directed to his admirably managed gymnasium, 21, Soho Square; his system is in accordance with the famous system of the late Captain Chiosso."—*Court Circular, Dec. 31st*, 1864.

Assault of Arms.—An Assault of Arms recently took place at the rooms of Mr. Griffiths, in Soho Square, and was numerously attended, principally by the friends of the pupils. The entertainment comprised the foils, single-stick, broad-sword, gloves, and gymnastics, and the splendid condition and masterly training of the members reflect the greatest credit on the effective method and instruction inculcated by Mr. Griffiths. Many professors of fencing were present, and met very able opponents in the advanced pupils of Mr. Griffiths. The entertainment was very artistically arranged, and from 7 till 11 o'clock, the lady and gentleman spectators were thoroughly gratified with the exhibition. These exercises, developing the muscular system and promoting a trained activity, are valuable aids to volunteer drill."—*The Civil Service Gazette, April 15th*, 1865.

"Deportment.—A graceful deportment is not only a pleasing personal accomplishment, but is highly conducive to health; hence the very general attention which is now being given to gymnastics. Amongst the schools established for the cultivation of these exercises may be mentioned the West London Gymnasium, Soho Square, under the direction of Mr. Griffiths, whose experience is the best guarantee for the efficiency of the establishment, which

embraces every facility for ladies' exercises in calisthenics and drilling, on Chiosso's system."—*The St. James's Chronicle, Dec.* 31*st*, 1864.

"Assault of Arms at the West London Gymnasium, 21, Soho Square.—On Tuesday evening, Mr. T. Griffiths gave his Third Annual Assault, which was numerously attended by his pupils and their friends. The programme comprised fencing, single-stick, broad-sword, bayonet and sword, and the gloves. Two prizes were given for fencing, and led to some well-contested encounters between many practised hands at the foil. Two prizes were also given for the gloves. The Assault commenced at 7 and terminated at 11 o'clock, amid a well-merited round of applause from the spectators and admirers of these manly exercises."—*The Field, the Country Gentleman's Newspaper, April 6th*, 1867.

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AUTHOR OF "THE MODERN FENCER."

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